

Veterinary Practice Act Fact Sheet

What is the Veterinary Practice Act 2018?

The *Veterinary Practice Act 2018* (the Act) regulates activities that may be undertaken by a vet, the process of registration of vets and premises, and the establishment of the Veterinary Practitioners Board (the Board). The Act and the Regulation ensure vet services maintain the welfare of animals and the protection of public health.

The Act is based on the *NSW Veterinary Practice Act 2003* (the NSW Act) to maintain consistency across borders and set out acceptable standards for vets.

What does the Veterinary Practice Act 2018 do?

The Act:

- prescribes acts of veterinary science that can only be performed by vet practitioners
- sets out the registration processes for applicants wishing to practice veterinary science in the ACT
- sets out the processes for making and investigating complaints, including the options of unsatisfactory professional conduct and professional misconduct available to the Board
- sets out the registration process for applicants wishing to register veterinary premises
- establishes the statutory roles of the Board and registrar
- covers other matters such as enforcement and the appointment of inspectors
- creates a register of vet practitioners and premises.

Broader matters within the veterinary industry, including biosecurity and workplace safety concerns are covered by other legislation.

Who does the Veterinary Practice Act 2018 protect?

The *Veterinary Practice Act 2018* protects animal owners and their animals as well as veterinary staff.

What is the role of the ACT Veterinary Practitioners Board?

The ACT Veterinary Practitioners Board (the Board) was established under the Act to oversee the ACT vet industry.

The Board's role includes:

- registering suitable and qualified vets, specialists, and premises
- investigating complaints against registered vets and specialists and taking disciplinary action when necessary
- monitoring the conduct of the profession
- developing codes of professional conduct for vets and setting standards for premises
- collaborating with other jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand to improve administration

- providing relevant, accurate and up-to-date advice to the public and vets on matters relevant to the profession
- providing professional development opportunities for vets
- approving educational and training courses for professional qualifications.

Do veterinarians need to be registered to work in the ACT?

Yes, under the Act all vets and vet premises must be registered in the ACT to protect the health, safety and welfare of animals and people. Vet nurses are not currently required to be registered in the ACT.

How does the registration process work?

All vets and premises must be registered in the ACT, including non-practising practitioners. The Board reviews and approves all applications.

The Act sets out the application requirements for both vet practitioners and premises. Vets applying for registration must be covered by up-to-date insurance.

Conditions of registration include:

- a) Vets undertake continuing professional development.
- b) Vets must implement any condition the Board may impose at any time.

Where applicable, the Board may request the registered vet to undertake additional education or training as a type of disciplinary action.

How is the Act enforced?

The Act sets out the process for making and dealing with complaints and the disciplinary action that the Board may take as a result of any investigations. These include unsatisfactory professional conduct and professional misconduct.

The Board is required to work with the Human Rights Commission when investigating a complaint.

The Board must conduct the investigation in accordance with the Veterinary Practitioner Code of Professional Conduct 2018 and the Veterinary Premises Standards 2018. Types of enforcement action include the cancellation or suspension of the registration, or the maximum penalty is imprisonment.

What is the Veterinary Practice Regulation 2018?

The *Veterinary Practice Regulation 2018* supports the *Veterinary Practice Act 2018* by regulating vet services and providing further information about registration requirements.

The Regulation outlines the restricted acts of veterinary science, which involve certain procedures and actions that can only be carried out by someone with registration to practice as a vet. There are some exemptions to this requirement, such as students in training under supervision by a registered vet.

For further information:

Please refer to the [Veterinary Practice Act 2018](#), the [Veterinary Practice Regulation 2018](#), the [Veterinary Practitioner Code of Professional Conduct 2018](#), and the [Veterinary Premises Standards 2018](#).

